

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA  
ROME DIVISION

**ROSTEFAN PASSANTINO,  
c/o Binnall Law Group, 717 King  
Street, Suite 200 Alexandria, Virginia  
22314, SA D. LUNA,**

Plaintiff,

v.

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,**

Defendant

CIVIL ACTION FILE  
NO. 4:23-cv-300-WMR

**ORDER**

The undersigned hereby recuses from this matter.

Plaintiff Stefan Passantino was scheduled to be a guest speaker in a seminar class that this Judge was scheduled to teach (and did teach) at the University of Georgia School of Law in January 2023. After the news of the events described in the filed Complaint became public in December 2022, the undersigned exchanged multiple texts with the Plaintiff to let him know that he was still welcome to participate in the undersigned's law school seminar, as the undersigned believed that his students would benefit from the Plaintiff's experience of working at the White House, particularly since the focus of the course was the intersection of

politics and judicial decision making. Ultimately, the Plaintiff himself decided that it would probably be best for him to withdraw from participating in the class given the allegations circulating in the press, even as he denied the truth of these reports.

While the undersigned believes he could and would be fair to both the Plaintiff and Defendant should he preside over this matter, despite his incidental communication with the Plaintiff about the logistics of the law school seminar, the undersigned acknowledges that some members of the public might disagree. Thus, to avoid any allegation of an appearance of impropriety, particularly given the undersigned's membership on the Committee on Codes of Conduct of the Judicial Conference. the undersigned recuses and asks the Clerk of Court to reassign this matter to another Judge on the Northern District of Georgia. This is an important matter and deserves consideration free of any suspicion of bias or conflict of interest.

So ORDERED this 21<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2023.

  
WILLIAM M. RAY, II  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE